

image
31 JULY \$1.95
\$2.70 CANADA

THE MAXX



DIRECT SALES



03111

7 09853 08102 9

image COMICS PRESENTS:



story & art
SAM KIETH

finishes
JIM SINCLAIR

lettering
KELL-O-GRAPHICS

color
STEVE OLIFF
and OLYOPTICS

logo
CHANCE WOLF

film output
TONY KELLY
and KELL-O-GRAPHICS

OLYOPTICS:

Tracey Anderson, Stacy Cox,
Michael "Jerm" Jeremiah, Patti Stratton Jordan,
Chris "Bar-BQ" McHugh, Tami L. Pleck, Quinn Supplee.

FOR IMAGE COMICS

Executive Director:
LARRY MARDER
Art Director:
DOUG GRIFFITH
Production Manager:
RONNA VLADIC

Graphic Design:
KENNY FELIX
Communications Director:
BRENT BRAUN
Accounting Administrator:
LEE PATIN
Director of Sales:
BOB MATSON

MAXX #31, JULY 1997, FIRST PRINTING. An Image Comics Title published by Image Comics, 1440 N. Harbor Blvd, #305 Fullerton, CA 92635. Entire contents TM and © 1997 Sam Kieth, all rights reserved. Any similarities to persons living or dead is purely coincidental. With the exception of artwork used for review purposes, none of the contents of this publication may be reprinted without the permission of Sam Kieth. Powered donuts?. Send correspondence to: Sam Kieth, 4363 Hazel Avenue, Suite 1-285, Fair Oaks, California, 95628. (nghtime@aol.com). Publishers and creator assume no responsibility for unsolicited materials or classified ads.

PRINTED IN CANADA.



I REMEMBER
SARA SAYING WE GOTTA
SOAK WHATEVER'S BEHIND THIS
DOOR IN WATER ASAP!

WHEN DID
SARA TELL
HER THAT?

QUIET, MARK.
IT LOOKS LIKE A
RIBBON OR BOW OR --
HEY! IT'S STARTING
TO GLOW!

WHOA! IT'S OVERLOADING!!

CAREFUL,
DAVE -- DON'T DO
SOMETHING ...

SURE YA ARE,
KID. HOW 'BOUT
A LITTLE HELP,
THOUGH, HUH?

IT'S
STOPPING NOW.
HOLD IT, MARK.

I CAN OPEN
IT, MOM. I'M STRONG
-- WATCH!

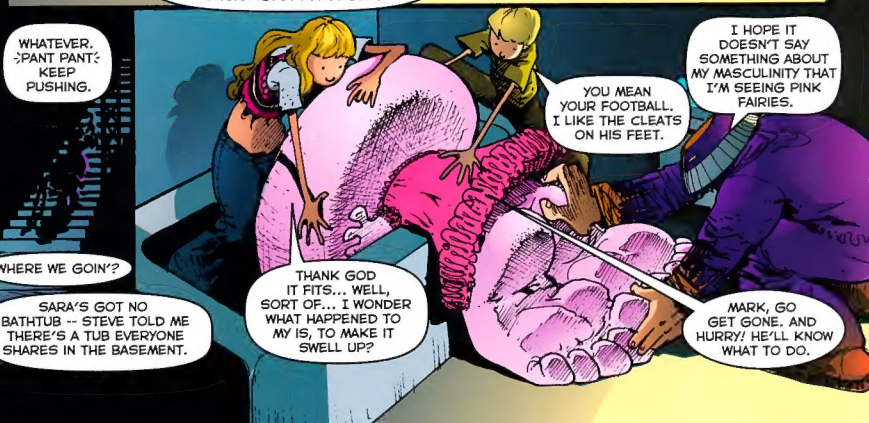
... STUPID ...

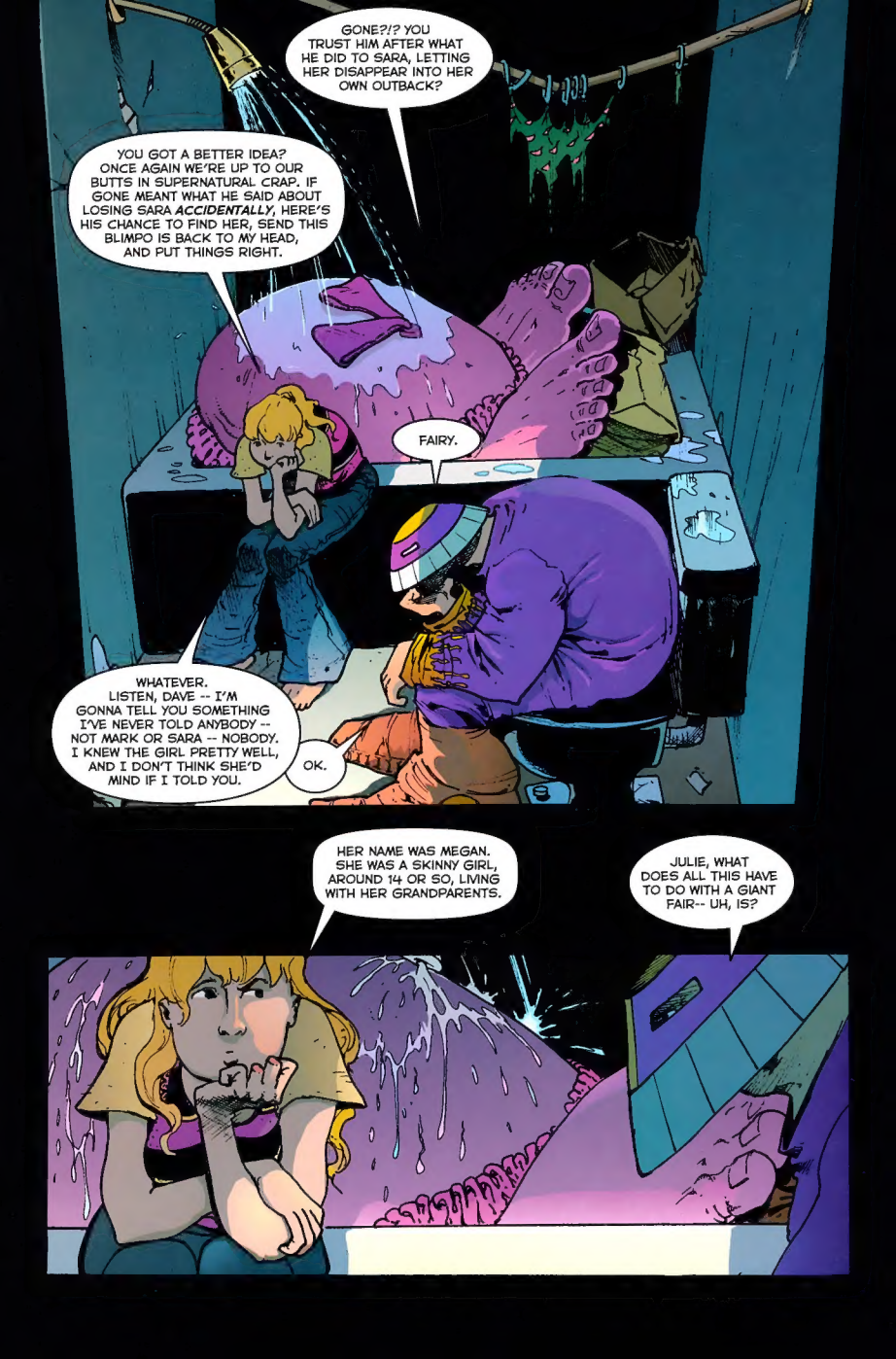
IT'S A ...

... A ...

FAIRY ...

... AN INCREDIBLY
HUGE FAIRY ...





A comic book panel set in a dark, industrial-looking environment. A large, giant pink foot is stepping down from above, crushing a man in a purple robe and a yellow headband. A woman with blonde hair sits on a ledge in the foreground, looking up at the foot. A showerhead in the upper left corner sprays water onto the scene. A string of green, goblin-like creatures hangs from a pole in the background.

GONE?? YOU
TRUST HIM AFTER WHAT
HE DID TO SARA, LETTING
HER DISAPPEAR INTO HER
OWN OUTBACK?

YOU GOT A BETTER IDEA?
ONCE AGAIN WE'RE UP TO OUR
BUTTS IN SUPERNATURAL CRAP. IF
GONE MEANT WHAT HE SAID ABOUT
LOSING SARA ACCIDENTALLY, HERE'S
HIS CHANCE TO FIND HER, SEND THIS
BLIMPO IS BACK TO MY HEAD,
AND PUT THINGS RIGHT.

FAIRY.

WHATEVER.
LISTEN, DAVE -- I'M
GONNA TELL YOU SOMETHING
I'VE NEVER TOLD ANYBODY --
NOT MARK OR SARA -- NOBODY.
I KNEW THE GIRL PRETTY WELL,
AND I DON'T THINK SHE'D
MIND IF I TOLD YOU.

OK.

HER NAME WAS MEGAN.
SHE WAS A SKINNY GIRL,
AROUND 14 OR SO, LIVING
WITH HER GRANDPARENTS.

JULIE, WHAT
DOES ALL THIS HAVE
TO DO WITH A GIANT
FAIR-- UH, IS?



KALAMAZOO

YOU GOT SOMETHING BETTER TO DO WHILE WE WAIT FOR GONE?

THIS STORY IS ABOUT SOMETHING, BUT I'M NOT SURE WHAT, YET.

I THINK IT'S ABOUT FITTING IN. I'M NOT EXACTLY YOUR TYPICAL TEENAGE GIRL. I'M A SKINNY TOMBOY, LOVE OLD FASHIONED MUSIC, AND HAVE WEIRD THOUGHTS.

I'M NOT SURE I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO ALL THIS GROWING UP CRAP.

PUBERTY IS BEGINNING TO SOUND LIKE SOME SORT OF DISEASE.



I'M NOT GOING TO KEEP GIVING YOU A LIFT TO THE LIBRARY IF YOU DON'T STOP UPSETTING YOUR GRANNY! IGNORING HER PHONE CALLS IS GONNA KILL HER ONE DAY! IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT???

WELL, IS IT???

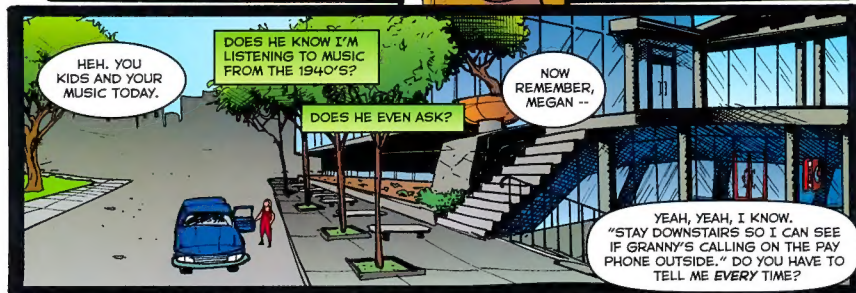
UH HUH.

THAT'S MY GIRL.

I CAN'T HEAR GRAMPS...

... BUT WHEN HE'S PUNCHING HIS HAND, "UH HUH" USUALLY COVERS IT.

THUMP
THUMP
THUMP



GRANNY CALLS AT LEAST 12 TIMES A DAY AND OVERWHELMS ME WITH POINTLESS QUESTIONS THAT ANYONE COULD ANSWER. TO HER AND GRAMPS, THIS SEEMS NORMAL. WE'RE SUPPOSED TO JUMP WHEN SHE CALLS, AND WE ALL TAKE CARE OF HER, BUT I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WRONG WITH HER.

IF ANYTHING.

I KNOW YOU THINK I'M AN OLD FOGEY, BUT I LOVE YOU, MEGAN.

OK, OK GEEZ. TELL THE WORLD.

OH GOD!

WELL -- THAT'S PROBABLY HER NOW!

GO ON -- ANSWER IT.

I WILL, I PROMISE. JUST GO ON TO WORK.

SHE'S WAITING.

ALRIGHT, ALREADY!

HULLO. YEAH, HI GRANNY. YEAH YEAH, I KNOW IT KEPT RINGING, BUT WE JUST GOT HERE -- NO, HE'S LEFT...

YAK YAK
YAK NAG NAG NAG
YAK NAG BLAH BLAH BLAH
YADDA YADDA YADDA
GUILT GUILT GUILT

YES, GRANNY. GOODBYE.

THERE'S THE EVIL DOOR. I VOWED NEVER TO PASS THROUGH IT SINCE "THE EVENT" OF 1973. I WAS 11.

I MUST USE THE UPSTAIRS ENTRANCE TO GO INSIDE.

RETREAT, EVIL DOOR! BACK!!

ONCE INSIDE, I GO DOWNSTAIRS WHERE IT'S SAFE AND COOL.

I WON'T EVEN GO INTO IT. TRUST ME -- I HAVE MY REASONS.

OH CRAP! LATE FOR CLASS!

AND SINCE THE EVIL DOOR BLOCKS MY WAY, I HAVE TO REVERSE IT ALL TO GET TO GRANNY'S PHONE!

I HATE THE OUTSIDE.
TOO MUCH NOISE, FRESH
AIR, AND DISTRACTION.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT
THE BIG DEAL IS ABOUT
GROWING UP. ALL ADULTS
I KNOW ARE IDIOTS. AT
LEAST I CAN FEEL STUFF.

WHEN PEOPLE GET
OLDER, I THINK
SOMETHING IN THEM
DIES. WHY ELSE ARE
ADULTS SO CONDESCENDING
TO TEENAGERS?

I LIKE THE DOWNSTAIRS
LIBRARY, WHICH IS COOL,
DARK AND MOULDY. I
HIDE AND LISTEN TO MY
'40'S MUSIC. NOTHING
EVER CHANGES IN THE
LIBRARY. IT'S GREAT.

GRAMPS MAKES ME
TAKE THIS HEALTH
CLASS AT THE LIBRARY.

IT'S TORTURE.

BUT IT'S NOT A JOKE,
OR A PHASE... IT'S
REAL!! WHY CAN'T
ADULTS SEE THAT?

WHAT'S
HAPPENING TO
YOU? ON YOUR
MARK, GET SET,
GROW!!! YOU'RE
GOING THROUGH
PUBERTY!

MY GOD,
SHE THINKS WE'RE
9 YEARS OLD.

DEODORANTS.

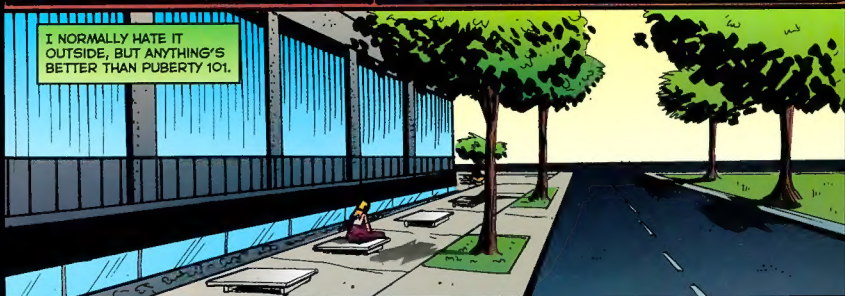
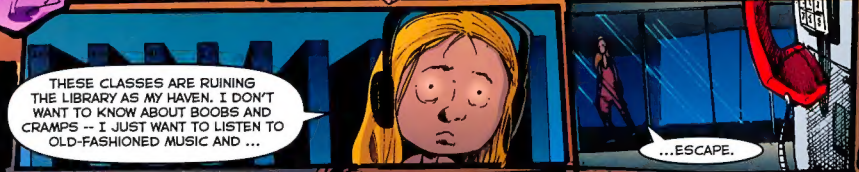
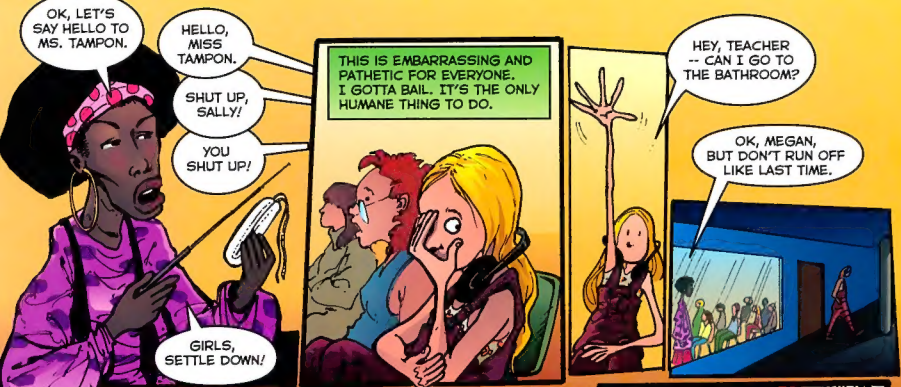
CRUSHES.

DATING.

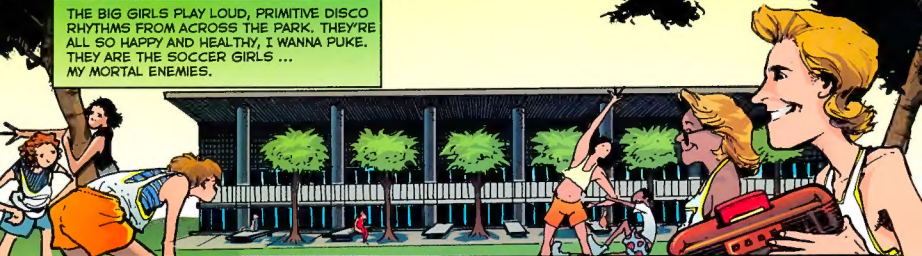
TRAINING
BRAS.

PUBIC
HAIR!

IT'S ALL A
NORMAL, HEALTHY
PART OF THE PHYSICAL
AND EMOTIONAL CHANGES
THAT AWAIT YOU ON YOUR
SPECIAL JOURNEY TO
WOMANHOOD!



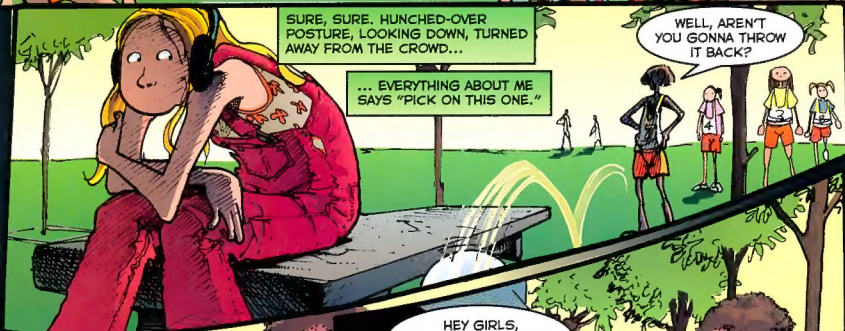
THE BIG GIRLS PLAY LOUD, PRIMITIVE DISCO RHYTHMS FROM ACROSS THE PARK. THEY'RE ALL SO HAPPY AND HEALTHY, I WANNA PUKE. THEY ARE THE SOCCER GIRLS ... MY MORTAL ENEMIES.



SURE, SURE. HUNCHED-OVER POSTURE, LOOKING DOWN, TURNED AWAY FROM THE CROWD...

... EVERYTHING ABOUT ME SAYS "PICK ON THIS ONE."

WELL, AREN'T YOU GONNA THROW IT BACK?



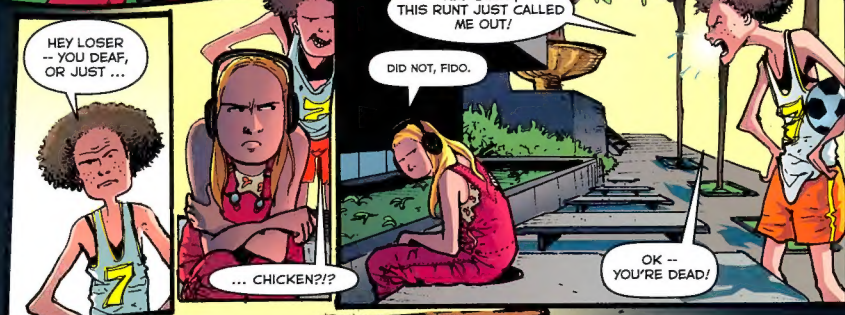
HEY LOSER -- YOU DEAF, OR JUST ...

HEY GIRLS, THIS RUNT JUST CALLED ME OUT!

DID NOT, FIDO.

... CHICKEN??

OK -- YOU'RE DEAD!



OK GOLDIE. I KNOW YOU CAN HEAR ME! GET UP SO I CAN HEAR YOU ... OR ELSE!

YEAH ...

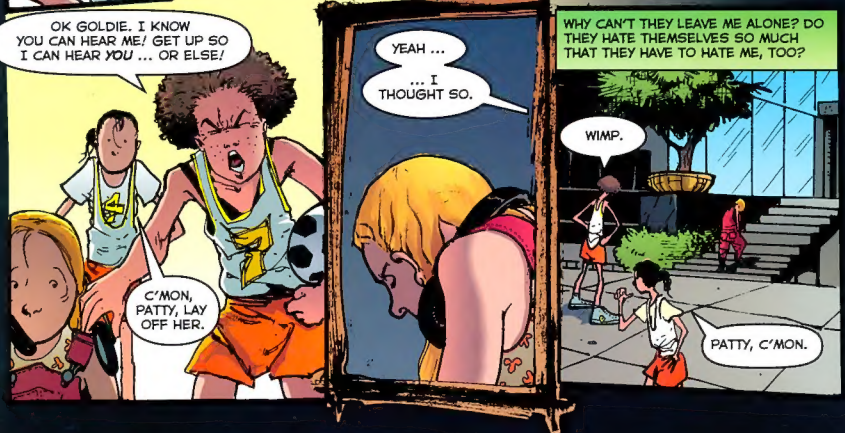
... I THOUGHT SO.

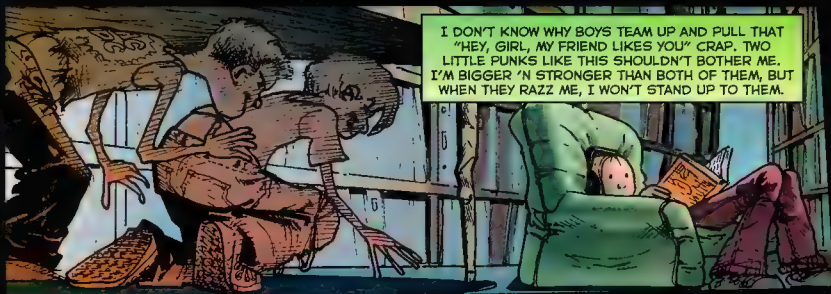
WHY CAN'T THEY LEAVE ME ALONE? DO THEY HATE THEMSELVES SO MUCH THAT THEY HAVE TO HATE ME, TOO?

WIMP.

C'MON, PATTY, LAY OFF HER.

PATTY, C'MON.





I DON'T KNOW WHY BOYS TEAM UP AND PULL THAT "HEY, GIRL, MY FRIEND LIKES YOU" CRAP. TWO LITTLE PUNKS LIKE THIS SHOULDN'T BOTHER ME. I'M BIGGER 'N STRONGER THAN BOTH OF THEM, BUT WHEN THEY RAZZ ME, I WON'T STAND UP TO THEM.



C'MON YOU TWERPS -- JUST DO IT. GET IT OVER WITH.



HEY! NOT MY HOMEWORK!



OH GREAT -- NOT THE EVIL DOOR AGAIN.



WHATSAMATTER, BITCH? SCARED?



HA HA HA...



TAP TAP TAP TAP



OK, PRIMATES! GIVE IT BACK!!!

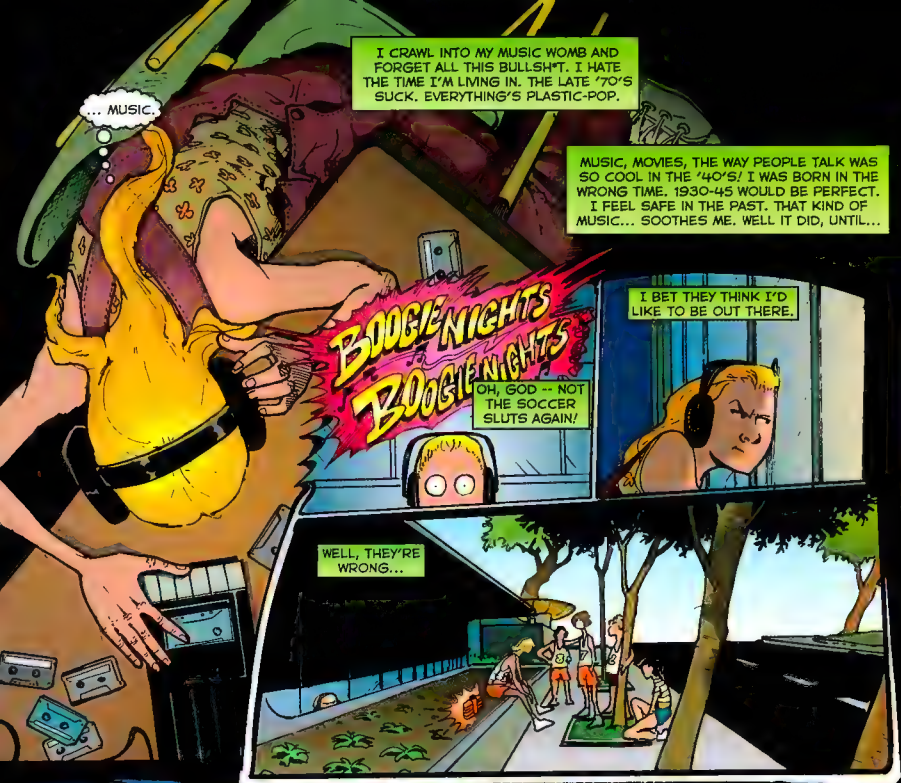


MEG-AN'S AFRAID...



DAYS LIKE THIS, MY ONLY ESCAPE IS...





I'LL JUST
TURN MINE UP.

WELL, THEY'RE
WRONG...

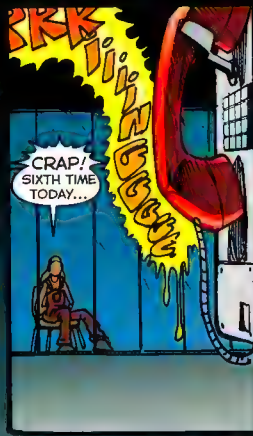
I BET THEY THINK I'D
LIKE TO BE OUT THERE.

OH, GOD -- NOT
THE SOCCER
SLUTS AGAIN!

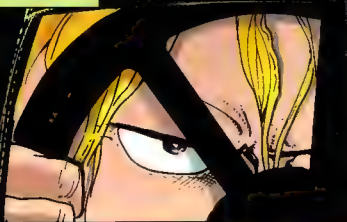
NO GOOD. THEIR BASS
IS JUST DROWNING IT OUT



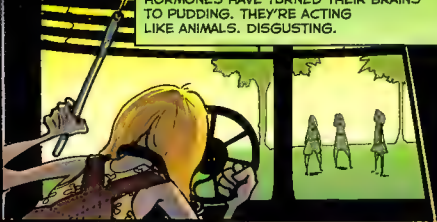
AT LEAST OVER
HERE IT'S QUIET.



THE EVIL SOCCER
GIRL MOCKS ME.



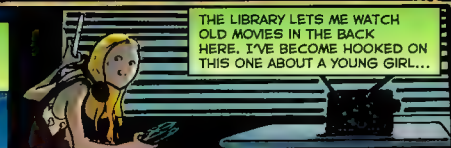
LOOK AT 'EM RUNNING AROUND, LAUGHING,
HAVING FUN, GIGGLING LIKE IDIOTS.
HORMONES HAVE TURNED THEIR BRAINS
TO PUDDING. THEY'RE ACTING
LIKE ANIMALS. DISGUSTING.



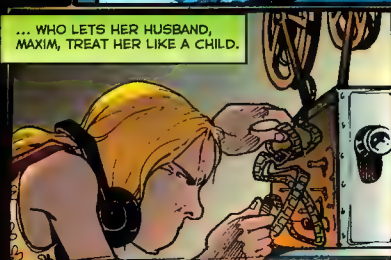
I'M TOO SKINNY
TO EVER GROW
UP AND BE LIKE
THEM, ANYWAY.



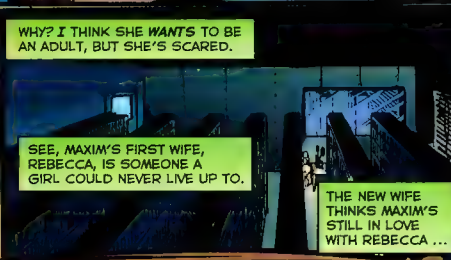
THE LIBRARY LETS ME WATCH
OLD MOVIES IN THE BACK
HERE. I'VE BECOME HOOKED ON
THIS ONE ABOUT A YOUNG GIRL...



... WHO LETS HER HUSBAND,
MAXIM, TREAT HER LIKE A CHILD.



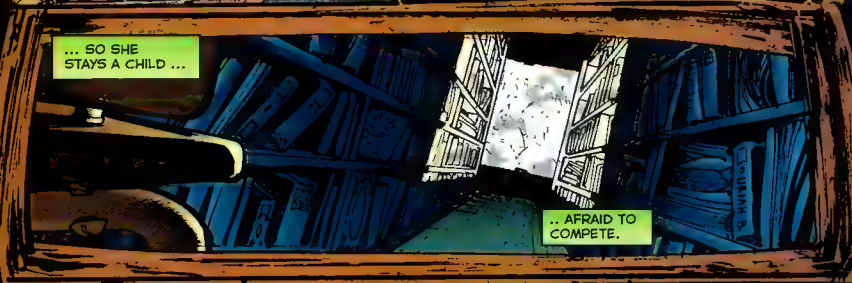
WHY? I THINK SHE *WANTS* TO BE
AN ADULT, BUT SHE'S SCARED.



SEE, MAXIM'S FIRST WIFE,
REBECCA, IS SOMEONE A
GIRL COULD NEVER LIVE UP TO.

THE NEW WIFE
THINKS MAXIM'S
STILL IN LOVE
WITH REBECCA ...

... SO SHE
STAYS A CHILD ...

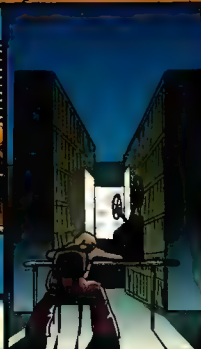


.. AFRAID TO
COMPETE.

MY FAVORITE PART IS WHERE
THE EVIL MRS. DANVERS
GETS HER TO FEEL
REBECCA'S UNDERWEAR.



NOT THAT I'M INTO
THAT OR NOTHING.



IT'S JUST SO WEIRD
FOR AN OLD MOVIE.





YOU'VE ALWAYS
WANTED TO SEE THIS
ROOM, HAVEN'T YOU?



IT'S LOVELY,
ISN'T IT. EVERYTHING
HAS BEEN KEPT JUST AS MRS.
DEWINTERS LIKED IT.



NOTHING
HAS BEEN ALTERED
SINCE... THAT NIGHT.

COME, I'LL
SHOW YOU HER
DRESSING ROOM.

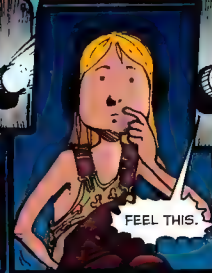
THIS IS
WHERE I KEEP ALL
HER CLOTHES.



YOU'D LIKE
TO SEE THEM...



... WOULDN'T
YOU.



FEEL THIS.



I KEEP
HER UNDERWEAR
ON THIS SIDE.

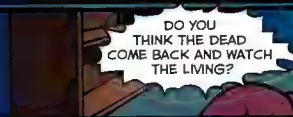
THEY WERE
MADE SPECIALLY BY
THE NUNS IN THE
CONVENT OF
ST. CLAIR.

SOMETIMES
WHEN I WALK
ALONG THE
CORRIDOR...

... I FANCY
I HEAR HER STEPS
BEHIND ME.



BUMP



DO YOU
THINK THE DEAD
COME BACK AND WATCH
THE LIVING?



:SOB: I
DON'T BELIEVE
IT. :SNIFF:

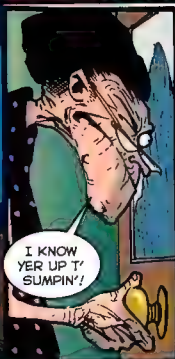


SUMPIN' UP.
WHAT'S THAT
BUMPIN' NOISE?

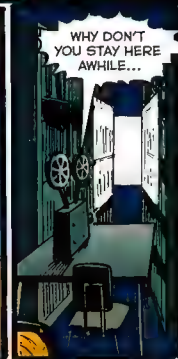


YOU LOOK TIRED.

HEY, LITTLE
MISSY! UNLOCK
THIS DOOR!



I KNOW
YER UP T'
SUMPIN'!



WHY DON'T
YOU STAY HERE
AWHILE...

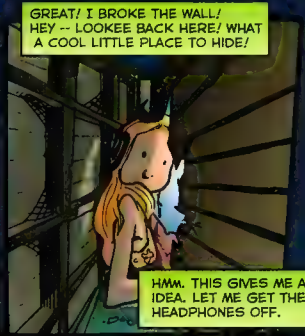


CAN YOU
HEAR ME??
OPEN UP!

... AND REST...



... LISTEN TO
THE SEA...



GREAT! I BROKE THE WALL!
HEY -- LOOKEE BACK HERE! WHAT
A COOL LITTLE PLACE TO HIDE!

HMM. THIS GIVES ME AN
IDEA. LET ME GET THESE
HEADPHONES OFF.



IF YOU DON'T
UNLOCK THE DOOR
THIS INSTANT...

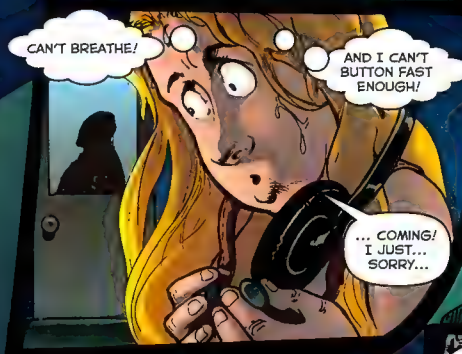
BANG
BANG
BANG

OH GOD!



BANG
BANG
BANG

... I'LL GET THE
SECURITY GUARD!



CAN'T BREATHE!

AND I CAN'T
BUTTON FAST
ENOUGH!

... COMING!
I JUST...
SORRY...



OK,
PROJECTOR OFF.
OH CRAP! THE WALL!!
THINK, THINK...



WHEW!
LOOKS OK.

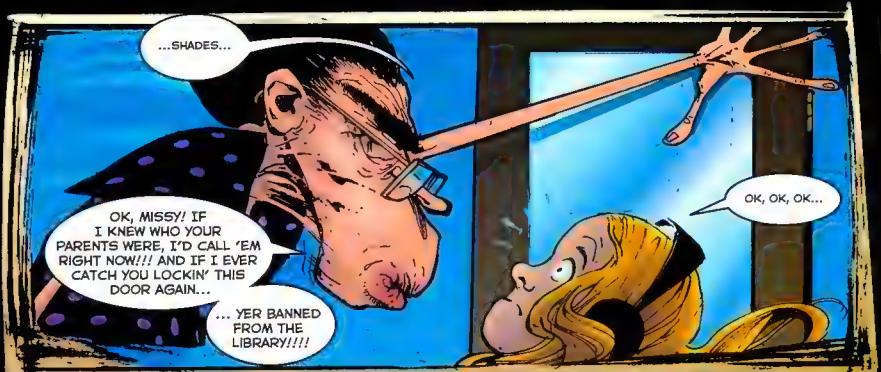
I'M COMING!



IF
SECURITY HAS
TO UNLOCK THIS
DOOR...



NO, WAIT!
I JUST HAVE TO
OPEN THE...

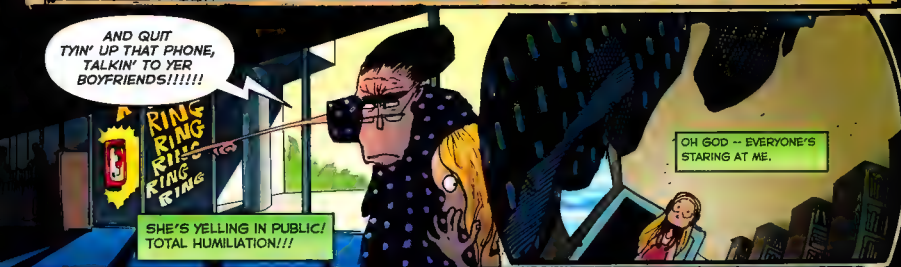


...SHADES...

OK, MISSY! IF I KNEW WHO YOUR PARENTS WERE, I'D CALL 'EM RIGHT NOW!!! AND IF I EVER CATCH YOU LOCKIN' THIS DOOR AGAIN...

... YER BANNED FROM THE LIBRARY!!!!

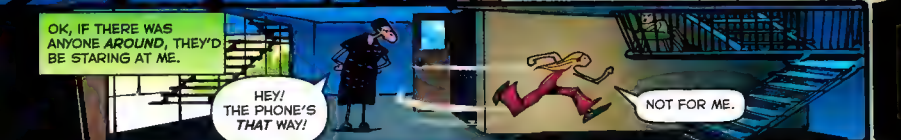
OK, OK, OK...



AND QUIT TYN' UP THAT PHONE, TALKIN' TO YER BOYFRIENDS!!!!!!

SHE'S YELLING IN PUBLIC! TOTAL HUMILIATION!!!

OH GOD -- EVERYONE'S STARING AT ME.



OK, IF THERE WAS ANYONE AROUND, THEY'D BE STARING AT ME.

HEY! THE PHONE'S THAT WAY!

NOT FOR ME.



CRAZY LADY, CRAZY LADY.

KIWI, KIWI.

IT STOPPED. THANK GOD SHE GAVE UP.

17 RINGS, NUMBUT.

BUSTED.



MY SHAME IS COMPLETE. I'M JUST LIKE THE GIRL IN THE MOVIE...

... ONLY GRAMPS IS MAXIM, THE EVIL LIBRARIAN IS MRS. DANVERS, AND GRANNY IS THE GHOST OF REBECCA, WHO HAUNTS ME. :SIGH:

BACK AT HOME, ME N' GRAMPS TIPTOE IN, FOR FEAR OF UPSETTING GRANNY. GRAMPS WALKS ON EGGSHELLS TO KEEP HER HAPPY, WHICH ONLY MAKES HER MORE GROUCHY.

EVEN THOUGH SHE TAKES SUGAR PILLS, WE'RE SUPPOSED TO ACT LIKE SHE'S DYING.

I DON'T KNOW WHY. IT'S GRAMPS -- HE'S THE ONE THAT'S GONNA DITCH US, AND LEAVE ME HERE WITH HER.

NOW YOU'RE ALREADY ON THIN ICE, IGNORING GRANNY'S CALLS LIKE THAT. MEGAN, YOU'LL BE THE DEATH OF HER SOME DAY IF YOU KEEP MISBEHAVING! SHE NEEDS YOU.

WELL, SHE'S NOT THE ONLY ONE BEING IGNORED.

NO LIP, YOUNG LADY.

SEE, MOMMA -- THE HEADPHONES MAKE IT HARD FOR MEGGY TO HEAR THE PHONE.

WHINE WHINE
YAK BLAH WHINE
NE YAK YAK YAK
WHINE WHINE
WHINE BLAH
BLAH

UH HUH.

YOU'RE RIGHT -- MAYBE SHE SHOULDN'T BE LISTENING TO ROCK MUSIC AT THE LIBRARY, ANYWAY.

SO THAT'S SETTLED! NO HEADPHONES AT THE LIBRARY, AND YOU ANSWER THE PHONE *EVERY TIME* GRANNY CALLS. GOT IT?

UH HUH.

OR...

... HOW 'BOUT I MAKE A *LIST* OF WHERE ALL YOUR STUFF IS SO YOU WON'T HAVE TO CALL ME OR DAD?

I DON'T LIKE LISTS.

SHE DON'T LIKE LISTS! MEGAN, SHE NEEDS *BOTH* OF US TO BE THERE FOR HER! YOU'RE YOUNG, YOU'VE GOT YOUR WHOLE LIFE. THIS IS *HER* TIME. DON'T BE SELFISH.

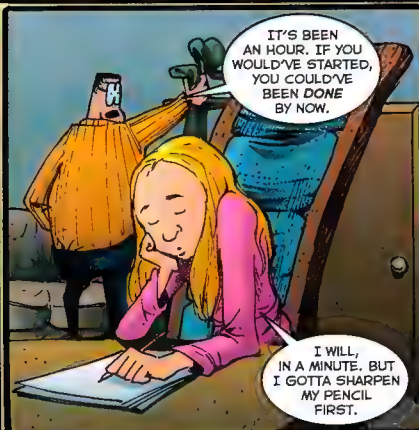
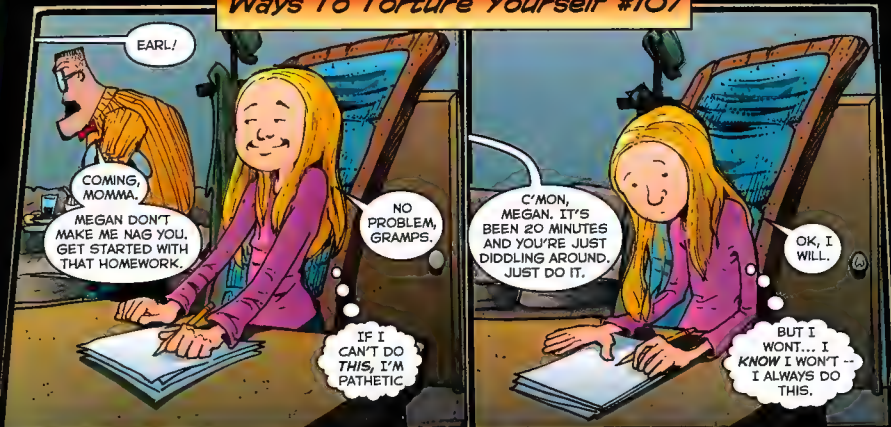
DON'T FORGET MY DINNER, AND MY BEDPAN NEEDS CHANGING.

OK, MOMMA. JUS' A SEC.

WHEN YOU IGNORE HER NEEDS, YOU'RE ONLY HURTING YOURSELF. YOU'VE GOT TO GROW UP SOMEDAY, MEGAN. WE CAN'T BABY YOU FOREVER.

YEAH, WE KNOW WHO THE BABY OF THIS FAMILY IS.

Ways To Torture Yourself #107



Blaming Others #368

RISE
'N SHINE,
PUNKIN.

C'MON, MEGAN --
DON'T FIGHT ME ON
THIS. GET UP, AND
FINISH YOUR
HOMEWORK.

I KNOW
YOU GET ANGRY
WHEN I HAVE TO GO
OUT, BUT I'VE GOT NO
CHOICE. I KNOW YOU'RE
AFRAID I'M GONNA
LEAVE. BUT NOTHING
WILL HAPPEN TO ME
UNTIL YOU'RE
READY.

YAWN: OK --
I'M JUST GONNA
CATCH A FEW WINKS.
YAWN: THEN WE'LL
GET UP.

WHY
DOESN'T HE
MAKE ME
GET UP AND
DO IT?

I PROMISE.

FINE! HE
TALKS TO ME
ALL NIGHT SO I
CAN'T GET MY
HOMEWORK
DONE...

...THEN
EXPECTS ME
TO GET MYSELF UP!
I CAN'T BE EXPECTED
TO DO THAT. I'M
JUST A KID.


YOU'RE
GROUNDED
FOR IGNORING
GRANNY
YEATERDAY.

BUT...

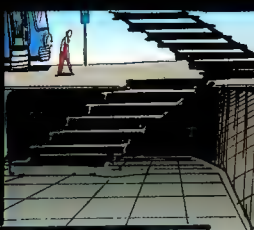
NO LIBRARY.
STAY PUT -- I MEAN
IT. DON'T LEAVE
THIS HOUSE!!!

YEAH...
WE'LL SEE
ABOUT
THAT.

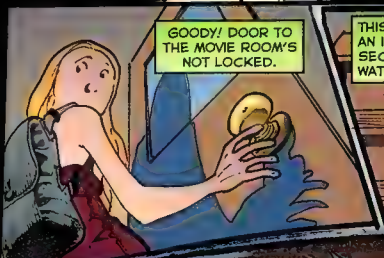
BUS
STOP



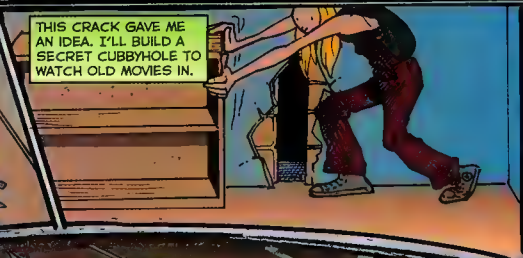
WOW! I GOT HERE SO EARLY, THERE'S HARDLY ANYBODY AROUND. GOOD! THIS WAY, NOBODY WILL SEE ME BUILD MY SECRET NEST.



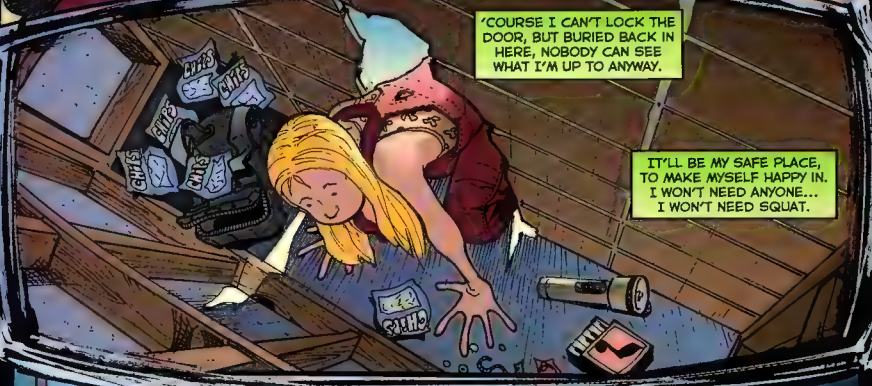
IF I CAN GET BACK HOME BEFORE GRAMPS GETS BACK, AND GRANNY DOESN'T FIND OUT I'M GONE, I MIGHT GET AWAY WITH THIS.



GOODY! DOOR TO THE MOVIE ROOM'S NOT LOCKED.



THIS CRACK GAVE ME AN IDEA. I'LL BUILD A SECRET CUBBYHOLE TO WATCH OLD MOVIES IN.




'COURSE I CAN'T LOCK THE DOOR, BUT BURIED BACK IN HERE, NOBODY CAN SEE WHAT I'M UP TO ANYWAY.

IT'LL BE MY SAFE PLACE, TO MAKE MYSELF HAPPY IN. I WON'T NEED ANYONE... I WON'T NEED SQUAT.



JUST CLOSE THE "SECRET DOORWAY"...



... PERFECT.



NOW TO RELAX WITH SOME NAT KING COLE TRIO AND MILLS BROS. WHILE IT'S STILL QUIET...

BUNGLE NIGHTS BOOGIE NIGHTS

OH GOODY. LOOK WHO COMES TO THE PARK TO PLAY SOCCER EARLY. MY PALS..

GOD, HOW I MISSED 'EM.

SHOOT-SOMEBODY'S USING MY MOVIE ROOM. OH WELL, AT LEAST MY CRACK'S COVERED.

DIE, SOCCER SCUM,
DIE, SOCCER SCUM,
DIE, SOCCER SCUM...

LAST NIGHT I HAD A DREAM.
I WAS BEING PULLED TOWARD
THE EVIL DOOR! I TRIED TO
RUN, BUT IT WAS USELESS!
AS I WENT THROUGH IT, I
BECAME AN OLD WOMAN.

I LOOKED ACROSS TO THE PARK AND SAW
A BUNCH OF KIWIS WITH LITTLE UNIFORMS,
PLAYING SOCCER. I WENT OVER AND STARTED
EATING THEM, WHICH THEY DIDN'T SEEM TO MIND,
AND, WELL, I WAS PRETTY HUNGRY, AFTER ALL.

I COULD FEEL THEM GIGGLING IN
MY OLD-WOMAN BELLY, AND HAD
JUST ABOUT FINISHED THE LAST
ONE, WHEN MRS. DANVERS FROM
MY OLD MOVIE SHOWED UP! SHE
STARTED TO YELL AT ME, ONLY
GRANNY'S VOICE CAME OUT.

SHE SAID I LET HER DOWN,
AND GRAMPS WAS LEAVING
BECAUSE I BLEW HEALTH
CLASS, AND I FEEL SO
GUILTY 'CAUSE I KNOW
SHE'S RIGHT. THEN SHE
HEARS LAUGHING COMING
FROM INSIDE MY BELLY, AND
KNEW I LIKED KIWIS. I WAS
BUSTED. THEN I WOKE UP.
WEIRD HUH? OH WELL --
ENOUGH DREAMS, ALREADY!



THEN IT
HAPPENED.

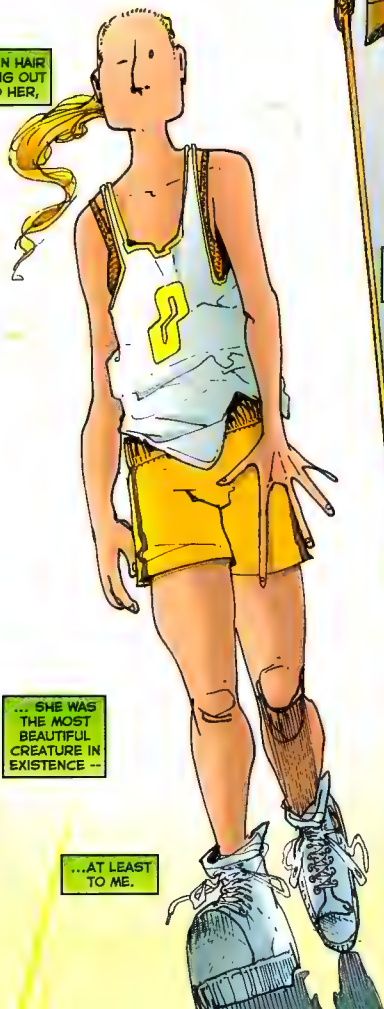
SHE WALKED IN.

LIKE SOME
GREEK GODDESS
CAME TO LIFE.

WHAT A
FOX.

IMPOSSIBLY
LONG LEGS,

GOLDEN HAIR
SPILLING OUT
BEHIND HER,



... SHE WAS
THE MOST
BEAUTIFUL
CREATURE IN
EXISTENCE --

...AT LEAST
TO ME.



SHE PASSED CLOSE
ENOUGH TO TOUCH,
TO BREATHE ON.

SHE WAS ATHENA,
GOLDEN GODDESS.
A QUEEN... A
SOCCER QUEEN.



SHE WAS AN "AMAZON
SOCCER QUEEN OF LOVE."

JUST WATCHING HER DO
THE MOST MENIAL OF TASKS
IS A SPIRITUAL EVENT.

HEALTHY, GRACEFUL,
MAGICAL....

... EVERYTHING
I'M NOT.

AND THEN SHE DID
SOMETHING AMAZING...

... SHE TOOK A DRINK!

WELL, IT WAS THE
WAY SHE TOOK IT.

AND JUST LIKE THAT, SHE
HEADED OFF, TOWARD THE
LIGHT, BACK WHERE SHE
CAME FROM. THEN, LIKE
A SLAP IN THE FACE...

IT HIT ME! MY MIND WENT
BLANK AS I WONDERED WHY
THIS SOCCER QUEEN HAD
SUCH AN EFFECT ON ME.

FOR ONE THING, THIS GODDESS WAS MILES
PAST THOSE BIMBOS IN THE PARK. SHE DIDN'T
EVEN WEAR THE SAME UNIFORM -- SHE BELONGED
TO SOME HIGHER RACE OF GOLDEN SOCCER
WOMEN, WHO SURELY MUST LOVE '40'S MUSIC -
- SHE WOULDN'T BE COOL IF SHE DIDN'T!

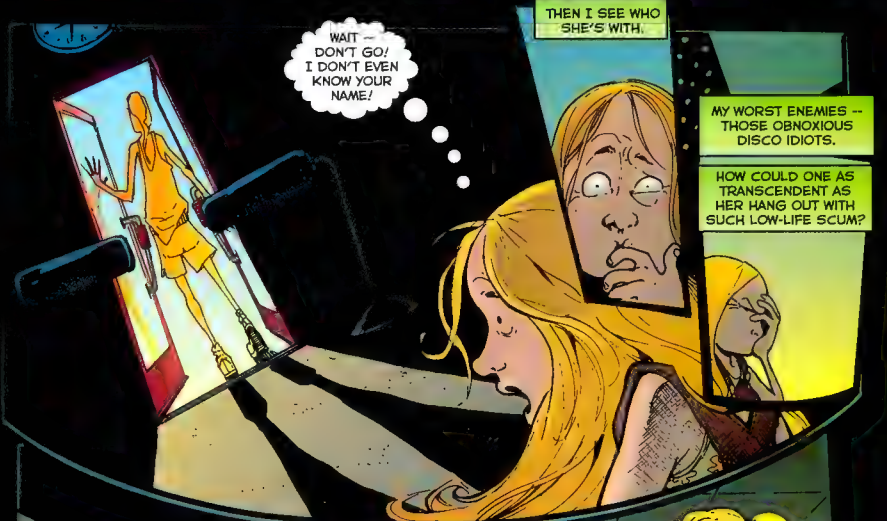
YEAH, SHE WAS BEYOND
US MORTALS, FOR SURE.

OH GOD! WHAT IF SHE SAW ME --
GAWKING LIKE AN IDIOT AT HER?
OH, GREAT! NOW SHE PROBABLY
THINKS I'M SOME SORT OF
PERVERT WHO'S STALKING HER!

HEY! WAIT A
MINUTE!

GEEZ -- I GOTTA
GET A LIFE.

SOMEBODY LIKE HER *MUST* BE USED TO
HAVING PEOPLE STARE AT HER IN AWE.
SHE'S *THAT* AMAZING! SHE'D UNDERSTAND
ME LOOKING -- I'M SURE SHE WOULD.



WAIT --
DON'T GO!
I DON'T EVEN
KNOW YOUR
NAME!

THEN I SEE WHO
SHE'S WITH.

MY WORST ENEMIES --
THOSE OBNOXIOUS
DISCO IDIOTS.

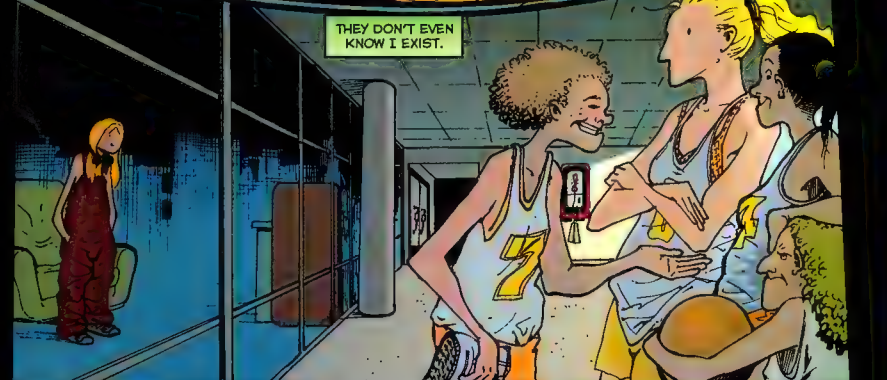
HOW COULD ONE AS
TRANSCENDENT AS
HER HANG OUT WITH
SUCH LOW-LIFE SCUM?



THEY DON'T EVEN
KNOW I EXIST.

THE EVIL DOOR MOCKS MY FEAR
OF EVEN CROSSING THE STREET
AND TALKING TO HER.

"HI I'M MEGAN.
WATCHING YOU TAKE A
DRINK FROM THE WATER
FOUNTAIN WAS THE MOST
SPIRITUALLY ORGASMIC
EXPERIENCE OF MY 14-
YEAR-OLD VIRGINAL LIFE."



EVEN IF I DID,
WHAT WOULD I SAY?

WHEN ALL ELSE
FAILS... THERE'S
CHOCOLATE.

BESIDES, WHO NEEDS
OUTSIDE STUFF ANYWAY?
I'D ONLY GET MY HEART
STOMPED TO BITS
OUT THERE...

IN HERE, I'M
COZY AND SAFE.

THEY WERE
MADE SPECIALLY
BY THE NUNS IN THE
CONVENT OF
ST. CLAIR.

SOMETIMES,
WHEN I WALK DOWN THE
CORRIDOR, I FANCY I HEAR
HER FOOTSTEPS
BEHIND ME.

FEEL
THIS. I KEEP HER
UNDERWEAR ON
THIS SIDE.

I LOVE
THIS PART.

HEY,
LITTLE MISSY!
THIS DOOR'S
LOCKED!

DO YOU
THINK THE
DEAD COME
BACK AND
WATCH THE
LIVING?

WHAT'S
GOING ON IN
THERE?

:SOB: I
DON'T BELIEVE
IT. :SNIFF:

YER UP T'
SUMPIN'...

I
KNOW
IT!

STAY
HERE AWHILE
AND REST...

BUMP!

AND THAT'S
MEGAN'S STORY --
OR THE FIRST
PART.

OH YEAH?
LISTEN, JULIE, THIS
"GIRL" YOU KNOW -- WOULDN'T
HAPPEN TO BE BASED ON A
CERTAIN OTHER TEENAGER,
WOULD IT?

THIS
GIRL LIVED WITH
HER GRANDPARENTS,
DAVE.

YOU'RE
FISHIN'. IT'S
NOT IMPORTANT
WHO SHE IS -- IT'S
IMPORTANT WHAT
SHE WENT
THROUGH.

DIDN'T YOU
TELL ME YOU
SPENT A WHOLE
SUMMER WITH YOUR
GRANDPARENTS
ONCE?



OK, WHAT'RE
YOU GOING THROUGH,
"MEGAN"?

MAXX,
I'M
NOT --



'SCUSE
ME, BUT I
UNDERSTAND
YOU CALLED.

WELL,
IT'S ABOUT
TIME. JULIE'S
HEARING SARA'S
VOICE IN --



SARA'S NO
LONGER IN HER
OUTBACK. AND SHE'S
NOT WATER, EITHER. SHE
HASN'T GOT A BODY TO
RETURN TO. THE
QUESTION IS:
WHERE IS SHE?

THE WOMAN
I BROUGHT IS
HER ONLY CHANCE
TO STRAIGHTEN IT ALL
OUT. SHE'S WAITING
OUTSIDE. I BELIEVE
YOU KNOW HER AS...

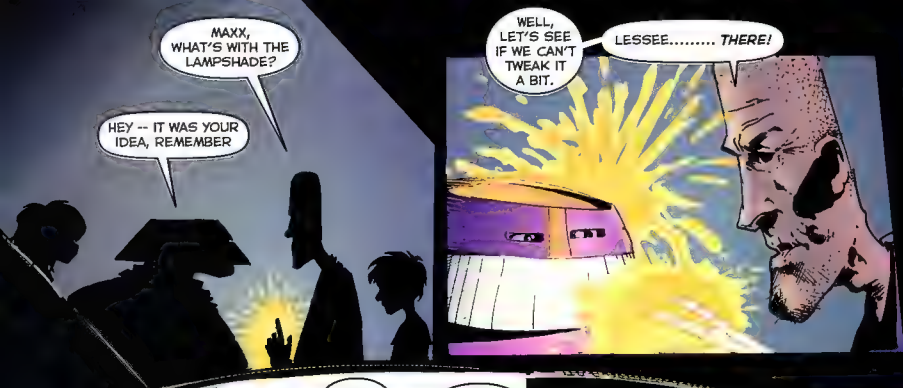
HEY MOM,
LOOK -- THE
FOOTBALL THING'S
WAKING UP!

MAXX,
WHAT'S WITH THE
LAMP SHADE?

HEY -- IT WAS YOUR
IDEA, REMEMBER

WELL,
LET'S SEE
IF WE CAN'T
TWEAK IT
A BIT.

LESSEE..... THERE!



YES!!!
THE OLD
MAXX IS
BACK!

BUT
YOU'RE STILL
DAVE, TOO,
RIGHT?

WHO'S
DAVE?

SHIT!

DADDY --
WHAT'S
HAPPENING?



SARA?





Hoo-ha, we're cyberspaced now with an e-mail address that comes right to us, not to MTV. If you don't want to deal with snail mail, **Maxx-e-mail us at skiet@webinfo.net**. By the way, as I surf around, I see several Mxhd sites with lots of cool Maxx info that I myself had forgotten (or never knew). Anyone with a Maxx site who would like its address listed in *The Maxx* is welcome to send it in to us, and we'll publish it so other Heads may partake.

As you can see in this issue, we got lots of excellent b&w fan art, and, as always, many spine-tingling, thought-provoking letters. Keep 'em coming.

Powdered donuts?!!

Robert Pierce
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Dear Sam,

Sasa in the tap
Drinking up the warter,
Julie in the kitchen
Wondering what she aughter,
Gone in the basement
Working on a plan.
Dave is holding his
Face with his hands.
Mark the only sane man
In an insane land,
Tillis on some IV
In the ICU,
Steve running 'round town
Doesn't have a clue.

Russell Dickson
Maysville, KY

Howdy Sam,

I like the storyline of the last few comics of *The Maxx*. Alice in Wonderland is my favorite story. I can't wait to read your next one.

A new Maxxhead thanking you,
Margret Follmer
Winfield, KS

P.S. I don't give a hoot if you misspell my name. People do it all the time. So don't

**SANDRA
KOPP**
Heidelberg,
Germany



worry about it.

Nowadays it's like you're not part of the club unless I misspelled your name!

Say—feeling bored? Got a spare week to kill? Try counting all the typos in *Friends of Maxx 2* and 3. (It's a long story...)

Dear Sam,

I just bought issue 29, and thought it was pretty cool. So Sara's water in a tap now, huh? Does her being water have something to do with flood-

...Still enjoying the MAXX !!

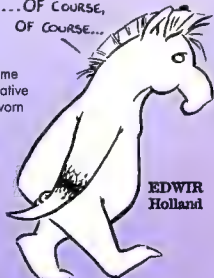
ing her out-back? Can't wait to see where you're going ...OF COURSE, OF COURSE...

I was reading issue 21 a while ago, when I noticed on Sara's radio that you used the name "Gurn Blanstien" as some conservative Senator type guy. I could have sworn that I heard that name used in a Steve Martin sketch. Any coincidence?

Jake Eisenberger
Hamilton, Ontario,
Canada

P.S. If you print my letter/artwork, I don't care if you spell my name wrong, just as long as I can recognize it.

The "Gurn Blanstien" thing was put in by Mike Heisler. And yes, that is where it came from. Good eye.



Dear Sam,

I read the letter column regularly, and find it fascinating as a profile of your readership [uh-oh]. (Please take this as a compliment on the editing of the column!) Most recently, in issue 29, I see the letters bemoaning the people who write in calling themselves friendless nerds. More credit to Michael Spera for suggesting they get off their @\$\$ and do something about it, though I'm not convinced haranguing someone about low self esteem is the cure. But it's a good letter to print.

Regarding the almost obligatory letter lines about "I hate my parents, they hassle/don't understand me" [which is also a province of the young, an arguably necessary part of developing a sense of self], one thing that doesn't happen for young people is to see the parents as human beings. I have friends with rebellious teenage children, and I recall when they were the same way, and I see them despair of knowing what to do—at how to reach their child.

Parents as human beings—not knowing what to do, muddling through. I think you're doing a wonderful job presenting this with Sara's Mom and with Julie. Not that it will be recognized as such—I suspect more of your readers will identify with Sara's or Mark's feelings. Children rarely forgive their parents for doing "the best they can"—until they are much older. But letting go of the resentment, the alienation, is crucial to moving on in life. I see your work as providing a possible framework for your readers to reach this understanding, and so to release. (And after all, the only thing anyone can really do is provide opportunity.)

Sincerely,
David Loehr
Redding, CA

Sam,

I'm writing to comment on Michael Spera's letter in #29. I agree completely. You see, I'm nowhere near what a "typical"



Maxxhead is supposed to be like. I'm old (37), I have a wife and two daughters, I work (lumber salesman), I'm Republican, I have many interests in my life, including playing golf! I'm like an anti-Maxxhead. In fact, most Maxxheads would probably hate my ass!

Anyway, I just wanted to let you know that supposedly "normal" folks also dig The Maxx. We have just as much need to turn off the reality switch occasionally, and a book like The Maxx is perfect for that purpose. Thank you kindly, sir.

Jeff Geary
Louisville, KY

Michael Spera gotta lotta letters—we think the next one speaks for many of them.

Hi Sam and Sam's "lowly slave who opens and organizes", [hit :)]

This is in response to the letter from Michael Spera of Braintree, MA. Please pass it on to the guy.

Michael,

Who's bitching and moaning now? And who came off as the ass, as opposed to the geek or nerd (your negative choice of words, buddy—not mine). I read "Traxx" and read about people who overcome problems. According to them, The Maxx helped a bit. One friend of mine even told me once that The Maxx made her cry because she was able to relate, and that the crying was therapeutic (reference Sara), and I thought that was great. "More power to her and her comic book," I thought to myself. People find faith in things like comic books when they can't find it in things like their family, school, or fellow members of society who call them names. If people wanna thank Sam Kieth for being their anchor to some kind of positive in their life, then I'll hell with it—LET THEM. It's their letter. And if Sam Kieth wants to print these letters, let him! It's his book! Nobody is trying to irritate you with their problems. And I'm sure you didn't mean to irritate me by telling people, who like the book for really substantial reasons, that you have something up your arse about their problems and their mode of communicating them!!! Grrr.

I didn't set out to attack you. But I may as well finish. I'm glad you have friends and a girlfriend and are overflowing with enough self-esteem to not consider yourself as something as bad and evil as a nerd, but, like you said, you do have some things you can improve on. My suggestion to you is that you improve on them and, in the mean time, STOP BITCHING AND MOANING. I like reading about people's problems. I like reading to find out if they triumph over them. I read The Maxx, don't I? Now, if you'll excuse me, I'm gonna go read some more letters.

Julie Ann Elefante
Tempe, AZ

Great defense, and let's hope that people are having happy endings out there (maybe we could hear from some of them?).

But all this controversy is making my stomach ache, so let's move on so Michael Spera won't think we're picking on him.

Sam,

Are you the same Sam Kieth who inked Matt Wagner's Mage: The Hero Discovered? If so, does every project you touch turn to gold?

Cheers,
Erik Carlson
Allentown, PA

No, powdered donuts... Aw gee, Erik, there's a lot of cross between gold bars in my career.

Speaking of gold, check out Matt Wagner's new Mage II from Image this month! I got my start inking Mage, and Matt's storytelling had a huge influence on me. Maxxheads should give his work a try.

And while you're at it, check out Dave Feiss's "Cow and Chicken" cartoon on The Cartoon Network, Tuesdays at 8 p.m. ET starting July 15. Hey—how'd you like The Flower and the Moose last issue?

Dear Sam Kieth,

I've figured out how the black isz disguise themselves! It stems from two basic principles: namely, that black goes with anything, and that in the absence of light, everything appears black.

Combine these two principles, and put, say, a suit on a black is. As a result of the is's coloring, any passersby will simply not see the is! Because the is is black, onlookers will assume there is poor lighting on the person/is, ascertaining who it is by its clothing (e.g. they would not see an is in a suit, they would just see a suit). The onlooker's mind would fill in the face of a businessman. Neat, eh?

Also, Gone can't go back and prevent Julie's rape and stop Dave from being hit (thereby not causing Dave to become The Maxx.) If he did, Gone would make it impossible for the events of issues 1-20 to happen. This would leave you no story to write, so you wouldn't write it.

Ryan Vandeley
Portland, OR

Cool.

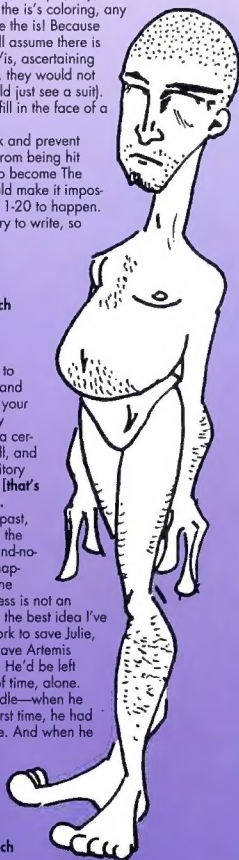
Vandeley, huh? Ever watch Seinfeld?

Hello Sam,

You said you didn't want to retell the same story again, and you're right. Don't. Think of your past stories as a long, lonely beach; you can go back to a certain point, pick up a seashell, and peek inside to unknown territory that no one knew was there [that's what I'm doing in this issue].

If Mr. Gone changes the past, DO NOT end this story with the typical everybody's-happy-and-no-one-remembers-what-really-happened scenario. As Mr. Gone very recently said, "Happiness is not an escape." I think—and this is the best idea I've had in a while—it would work to save Julie, save Sara, save her Mom, save Artemis Pender... but not Mr. Gone. He'd be left over, forgotten, a man out of time, alone. He'd face an unsolvable riddle—when he screwed up Sara's life the first time, he had to watch her from a distance. And when he fixes her life the second time around, he'd still have to watch her from a distance, seeing her with a happy normal father. (I'm not sure you can separate the Artie from the Gone, much as Artie has tried.)

Let us see the blue cape again, if only for a moment! When you



Thomas Riviere
Montpellier, France

showed Mr. Gone in issue #29 with the glowing hand and white slits for eyes, I imagined that I could hear a collective shout of triumph from Maxxheads (or Gone-heads) all over the universe... something to the effect of, "HE'S BACK!"

Your admirer
and brother unaware,
Marc Elliott L'Hommedieu
Christiana, TN

Okay. See this issue.

Dear Mr. Kieth,

I think you should continue the redemption of the characters as they deal with what has happened in their pasts. I don't think it's such a good idea for Mr. Gone to go back in time and try to fix what has happened. And I have reasons.

First off, it's important for a story (some would say) to deal with the real consequences of your actions. In Shakespeare's time, he was criticized for showing too much violence and dementia in his plays. His defense was to say that by showing it, the patrons would learn (eventually) to deal better with hardship in their own lives.

Second, going back in time to fix the present is generally a bad idea in any story. It seems to cheapen the experience the reader has gone through in the first place.

And third, I'm not sure how you could go back to that time and not have either new readers be very confused as to what's happening, or have regular fans turned off by returning to the themes of previous issues.

As far as Sara's being lost in her outback, it's a very serious issue. If it were me, I'd have Mr. Gone return to Sara's outback in a desperate effort to find her. He should make a sacrifice of sorts to help her realize how much people care about her. I would also like to see Steve come to her rescue (finally) and show himself that he has self-worth. Perhaps in the outback, Steve's powers come alive and he rises above the weirdness and understands (as Gone does) the machinations of Sara's mind.

Paul Hurd
Salem, MA

Tempting as heroes are, I wouldn't count on Steve being a big part of the story from here on out.

Dear Sam,

How about a special "normal" issue?
From somebody who would say
anything to get his letter printed,
Aries Santos
Manila, Philippines.

I don't know how.

Hey Sam!

Don't you have any upbeat fans out there in Readerland?

Jason Saul
Lake Grove, NY

No.

Sam,

I originally became interested in The Maxx because it was multi-layered and I didn't know exactly what was going on, but I could tell it was something interesting. Most of all, I loved the characters. Maxx and Julie were people with whom I could sympathize. I'm 25 and I've had my share of bad relationships, and Maxx's single-minded determination, as well as his dependency on Julie, made him a strong character that a person could "latch on to" and feel for. Julie's hard-boiled exterior and idiosyncrasy gave her the same qualities. Even Sara and Gone were strong, if enigmatic, charac-

ARIES SANTOS
Manila, Philippines



ters. The story had a fairly definable goal: why is Julie so screwed up and what is her real relationship to Maxx and Gone? This made for compelling interest.

The reason I say these things is that it seems the new storyline is lacking in many of these aspects. Now I don't, by any means, mean to offend or criticize out of hand, but these are my thoughts, and perhaps they'll help in deciding a general direction.

The "new" characters of Sara and Artie seem to be...well... simple. Sara, who I assume is really the primary character, has just been carried along by all the minor characters. She seems to have little idea of who she is. And though in issue 26 we finally got the story of Gone, Artie is just a shell. And if it were his point to be a shell, the point is never really made. He roams

around as well, reacting to minor characters and never really showing the screwed-up individual that his life would probably have left him, except in a certain apathy. Who are these two? What makes them worth reading about? See what I mean? By this time, with everything explained concerning the outback, what are they trying to discover? I think we're fairly familiar with Sara's problems, and her Maxx seems little more than a prop. Dave and Julie remain much stronger characters than Sara and Artie, and I find myself trying to see into Dave's head more than anything (considering what we know about him). Julie's son even sparks more interest for the contrast he provides to the brooding, psychological-damaged adults. And now it seems that we're going back.

I beg you, please don't return to the old days. Don't change Julie's story. They say you can't go home again, and that's what it appears you're trying to do. However much I might like to see the old Maxx, I know that he's gone, and I'd hate to see his efforts tampered with. Again, I beg you, leave him alone.

Now, with all that negative stuff having been said, I have an idea for you. Give us somebody new and altogether different. Like Ira. I loved his story in Friends. His quest for manhood and the crazy things he did gave him a fresh new angle. And Charley... what can I say? When he started screaming, "The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be!", I fell for him immediately. Those are some damn interesting characters! And surely you've got a couple of more tricks up the proverbial sleeve. Let's see 'em!

With heartfelt admiration,
W. Keith Work
Euless, TX

Now, before everybody starts jumping all over this guy, maybe he's got some valid points. Or maybe he's full of doody. I'll have to think about it.

Anyway, I'm glad there's more than one person out there who likes the idea of mixing "Maxx" and "Friends" universes together.

Dear Sam Kieth,

Friends of Maxx may have been cancelled, but that doesn't mean it could be forgotten. I've just finished reading FOM #3, and I've never been touched by a comic book so much. The Maxx itself has always been special, because although the main story concept is somewhat surreal, the characters have always been portrayed so realistically. It's clear that, with FOM, you obviously wanted to do a book about real life... normal stuff. Effectively a step ahead of The Maxx in storytelling.

FOM made me realize that there are others like me, and even the letter column told me that there are girls out there not interested in macho stuff. Thank you for giving me something to relate to. Don't be afraid to keep up the emotional jeopardy!

Elliot Jay Stocks
Kent, England



ROBERT LARSEN
Brighton, MA

Sam,
I loved FOM, and totally agreed with Charley, but am glad that you've decided to stick with just The Maxx. Thanx for Head to Head; I've met a ton of great people because of it!

Riordan Bates

You agree with Charley??? I don't know whether to be proud or disgusted...

Hi Sam,

Can I purchase artwork from your books, especially the painted pages?

Kevin Hansen

Grafton, WI

Nope, sorry. I don't sell much art these days, not because of vanity, but because I just don't like to spread my white-out in public.

Yo! Sammy boy!

I'm a big Maxx collector—I've got the statue, the figure, #1/2 and so on, but my collection isn't complete. Could you print a list of all the Maxx stuff that's been made and how to get my grubby little hands on it (or if it's even available anymore).

Alex [Alf] Harris

Berkeley, CA

Your mouth to our typewriter, next month. BUT—most of the Maxx stuff has to be gotten through collectors (or fans who've gotten tired of it and need the money). Still, we'll see what kind of a list we can put together.

Dear Mr. Kieth,

There are two things in issue 29 I would like to respond to.

The first is the disturbing letter by a Mr. Tony Ingrisano, in which he refers to the published submitted art by your fans as "crap". A great deal of this work is refreshing, interesting, and above all, honest. Most are not copies of other illustrators' styles in the comic book genre, but are personal visions of a thing these people care very much about—your story.

The second issue I would like to respond to is your mention of your respect for "fine artists." I am a "fine artist", living, working, and pursuing my Masters of Fine Art in upstate New York. My wife is also an artist working on her Masters in Art Education. Needless to say, I too have a great respect for "fine artists", in particular, you, Mr. Kieth. I think your body of work, called "The Maxx", transcends mass communication and illustration, and becomes fine art in itself. Like Daumier and Crumb, you have ceased to be a "graphic artist", and are a "fine artist" in every sense of the word.

Keep on truckin',

Thomas Taylor

Saratoga, NY

Fan art rocks. Fine art rocks. Fan art is far out fine art.

Dear Sam,

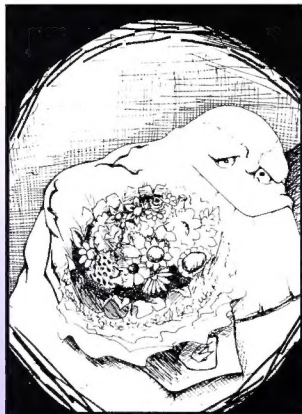
I have something to say to K.M.C.'s letter in #29. She seems to be a strong girl. Doesn't it suck how a lot of us have to put up with that sh*t? Although I've not been through the same as her, I've never been liked too much. I've been bashed and teased all my life! And awhile ago, I was sick of the jokes about my weight, so I ate very little and exercised non-stop, until I passed out. I've got a grip on it now. See—not only women have to put up with that fat sh*t! I'm now 62 kgs, and girls still treat me like sh*t! (Sorry about all the sh*t.)

Anyway, if K.M.C. or anyone wants to talk, I'll listen. We can share stories and talk about our problems. Talking (I think) helps.

Tim Lubcke

1 Corconda St. Clearview

Adelaide, Australia 5085



**Philip Jeromin
Schenefeld, Germany**

Mr. Kieth,

I had no idea that your comic was still alive and well and being published monthly [well, sort of]. You see I've been sort of burned out with comics the past six months, picking up only Strangers in Paradise, Stray Bullets, Bone, and Madman. Every trip to the comic store, I whined to the owner about the lack of books with good storylines that kept me waiting with great anticipation for the next issue.

Then I discovered Maxx 26, and was so impressed with the amount of feelings you were able to convey through the story and art. I felt the horror of Mr. Gone's life as if I had lived it.

My greatest regret is not having picked this book up sooner. With heartfelt admiration, I thank you for sharing your creative genius.

Your loyal one,

Holly Thurston

Springfield, MA

P.S. I love how you print reader art! It's encouraging to us struggling artists.

PS/HOUSEKEEPING DETAILS WE GET ASKED ALL THE TIME:

No subscriptions or retail sales available/sorry. Use "Head-to-Head" to find back issues/fan clubs/whatever (use the address in the indicia)/postcards are cheap and easy like us/WRITE LEGIBLY. No we don't print all the letters or art we get/too many/yes SAM DOES read them ALL/you might get answered or printed or edited/you might not/life's funny that way. B&w art has better chance of being published than color/can't return artwork/sorry. Keep 'em coming/the better the letters and submissions, the better the book! Oh yeah.



**HONEY CLARK
Pennsylvania**



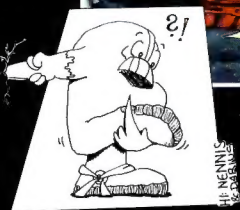
ISZ!

DAVE RAMEY

KILL ISZ!



MATT COTE Weare, NH



All 4 black & white drawings done by
JAMES YONICK
Mannheim, Germany